

## **FAQ's Regarding Licensure as a Structural Engineer in California**

The only structural engineering licensure examination currently administered by and accepted by the California Board is the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering Examination. The NCEES 16-hour SE exam was first offered in April 2011, replacing the separate Structural I and II exams. The new SE exam is a breadth and depth exam offered in two components on successive days. The 8-hour Vertical Forces (Gravity/Other) and Incidental Lateral component focuses on gravity loads and lateral earth pressures. The 8-hour Lateral Forces (Wind/Earthquake) component focuses on wind/earthquake loads.

Information about the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam is available on the NCEES website at: [http://www.ncees.org/Exams/SE\\_exam.php](http://www.ncees.org/Exams/SE_exam.php)

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

Q1. My application for a structural engineer license has been approved, what exam will I be taking?

A1. The new 16-hour NCEES Structural Examination.

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Q2. I have passed the NCEES SE II exam, can I get credit for the NCEES SE II exam that I have already passed?

A2. No.

The NCEES SE II was part of the previous requirements for licensure as a Structural Engineer in California and was used only in conjunction with the California Structural Engineering Seismic Exam (CSESE). Because the CSESE exam was discontinued after the October 2011 exam administration, all candidates are required to pass the new NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam to become licensed as a Structural Engineer.

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Q3. I have passed the CSESE exam but have not passed the NCEES SE II exam. What options do I have?

A3. Your only option is to pass the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam.

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Q4. If I have passed the CSESE exam but not the NCEES SE II exam, can I use my CSESE exam as credit for an 8-hour portion of the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam?

A4: No. The NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam is one exam administered over 2 days and you MUST receive a passing score on both 8-hour portions in order to be considered as having passed the exam. However, you do not need to take both 8-hour portions of the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam during the same exam administration; you may pass the two 8-hour portions separately.

Q5. Does passage of the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam make it possible to be licensed in other states?

A5. We cannot offer a response to that question. Each state sets their own licensing requirements. You would need to contact the licensing agencies in the other states in which you would like to be licensed to determine their requirements.

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Q6. When and how often will the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam be offered in California?

A6. The NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam will be offered at least once a year in California. Budget considerations will determine if the exam will be offered once or twice a year in subsequent years. Exam schedules are posted on the Board's website and are updated as more specific information becomes available.

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Q7. I have taken and passed the NCEES SE II and the Washington State SE III. Are these exams accepted for structural engineer licensing in California?

A7. Yes, these two exams are accepted for comity licensing as a structural engineer in California.

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Q8. I do not have a California Civil PE license. Am I still required to have this license to apply for a Structural Engineer license in California?

A8. Yes.

The requirements for licensing as a structural engineer in California have not changed. You must still first be licensed as a Civil Engineer in California before applying for licensure as a Structural Engineer. Only the exams used to qualify for licensure as a Structural Engineer are changing.

Go to <http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/seappintro.shtml> for additional Information regarding becoming licensed as a Structural Engineer in California.

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Q9. What are the exam requirements to become licensed as a Structural Engineer in California?

A9. You must have taken and passed any one of the following three pairs of exams in order to be licensed as a Structural Engineer in California:

- ☐ NCEES SE II exam and CSESE exam (these exams are no longer offered).
- ☐ NCEES SE II exam and Washington State SE III exam (these exams are no longer offered).
- ☐ NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam

Q10. I have taken and passed the 8-hour NCEES Structural I exam [the “NCEES SE I exam”] and the 8-hour NCEES SE II exam. Are these two exams accepted instead of the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam since they equal a 16-hour exam in structural engineering?

A10. No.

The NCEES SE I exam is accepted for licensure as a Civil Engineer in California in place of the NCEES Civil PE exam. The NCEES SE I exam is considered to be an entry-level exam for initial licensure as a Professional Engineer.

The Structural Engineer license is considered a mastery-level license and is tested at the mastery-level. The NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam is considered to be a mastery-level exam. Candidates who took only the NCEES SE I exam and NCEES SE II exam would not have the depth of seismic testing required for the California Structural Engineer license. Therefore, all California structural engineer candidates are required to take and pass the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam.

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Q11. When can I file an application to take the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam in California?

A11. If you are a first-time applicant for licensure as a Structural Engineer, your application must be postmarked by, or personally delivered to the Board office on the published final filing date for the exam you wish to apply for. The examination schedule and final filing dates are found on the Board website at: [http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/exam\\_schedule.shtml](http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/exam_schedule.shtml)

If you have previously submitted an application but have not yet passed your licensing exams, you will need to submit a refile application to take the NCEES 16-hour Structural Engineering exam. The refile application must be postmarked by, or personally delivered to the Board office on the published refile final filing date found on the Board website at: [http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/exam\\_schedule.shtml](http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/exam_schedule.shtml)

Detailed application information can be found at  
[http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/exam\\_registration\\_information.shtml](http://www.pels.ca.gov/applicants/exam_registration_information.shtml)